

► Counterpoise ◀

The Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon

Volume XLVIII

February 2008

Number 2



Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon meets every 2nd Thursday at 7:00 pm at the First Lutheran Church of El Cajon. The address is 867 South Lincoln Ave. Next meeting:
February 14, 2008 7:00 pm

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All Official written communication is to be submitted to:

A.R.C.E.C. P.O. Box 50, El Cajon, CA 92022
The Counterpoise is a publication of the Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon (ARCEC). It is published once monthly and contributions are accepted from officers and members of the club. We also encourage input from members of the Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon. Opinions expressed are solely that of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon (ARCEC). Articles may be submitted either by e-mail or mail to the editor.

Paul Rios at:
WA6BGScounterpoise@cox.net or by post
1237 Victor Ave #4, El Cajon, CA 92021
The Deadline is Sunday after the General Meeting.

Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon
Web Site: <http://www.wa6bgs.org>

Counterpoise E-Mail address
WA6BGScounterpoise@cox.net



Speaker: John Graf, WA6L
Topic: Contesting

2008 Officers

President	KC6QLS	Paul Rios	593-9445
Vice-President	KO4QT	Steve Weed	733-2320
Secretary	N6ERD	Dan Severance	449-8526
Treasurer	KG6JCW	Mike "Stogie" Panger	263-4439

2008 Board of Directors

Affiliated Clubs	AE6AV	Larry Plummer	460-1818
Instructor	AE6QW	Gordon Shackelford	561-6323
Membership	KC6TBG	Ann Rios	593-9445
Net Manager	KG6TDP	Mike Oberbauer	444-9090
Public Service	N6NKJ	Rich Beisigl	444-5465
	KF6KE	Richard West	462-2771

2008 Standing Committees

Bylaws	N6OPH	Mike Maston	296-9067
Club Attire	K6PKS	Paul Schmidt	733-2284
Counterpoise Editor	KC6QLS	Paul Rios	593-9445
Education	N6OPH	Mike Maston	296-9067
Elmer	WA6L	John Graf	368-7413
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Estate Sales	N6JOJ	Tom Myrick	449-3547
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Photographer	K16EEL	Bridget Rios	
Post Mistress	KC6TBG	Ann Rios	593-9445
Prizes	AF6BC	Floyd Lang	697-8655
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Technical	W6RHV	Bob Boehme	448-4728
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WAMO	AE6CQ	Michael Martak	562-6477
Web Master	KC6QLS	Paul Rios	593-9445
Welcome	KI6JUD	Linda Weed	971-1535
Social Chair	KI6JUD	Linda Weed	971-1535

Staff and Writers

KC6QLS	Paul	Editor
KO4QT	Steve	Vice President
N6ERD	Dan	Meeting Minutes
KI6FIH	Tassy	HAM Spot Light
AE6CQ	Michael	WAMO
W5COM	Tom & Lisie	Jokes
N6NKJ	Rich	Amateur Radio at Large
WA6L	John	Down Below in EC
WA6MHZ	Pat	Crest Radio Museum
KI6EEL	Bridget	Photos

SANTEE DRIVE-IN SWAP MEET

10990 Woodside Ave., North
FOR INFORMATION, CALL 449-SWAP
Ham Radio, Computers, Electronics
ACRES & ACRES OF BARGAINS
1st & 3rd Saturday of the Month
GATES OPEN 6:30 AM

From The President

Paul KC6QLS



I am very happy to report that Steve KO4QT, Rich N6NKJ and I went up to HRO and purchased all of the gear for CAL Fire! It is nice to see a dream come true. The club has worked very hard, and it was an unpaved road. Again, I would like to say thanks to Paul K6PKS and his club SURF for aiding us with the funds. If it was not for them, we would still be on the road.

We will be looking for people to help with installing the gear. We need people to do some roof work, building the cabinet, and hooking up the radios. Even if you are a new ham and/or a new member to the club, roll up your sleeves and pull some coax!

I would like to say something to the readers of the Counterpoise who are not members. I know you might live in another state, country or just around the block, but you are welcome to attend a meeting if and when you get to San Diego. I have seen some new faces at some of the meetings and found out that they just stopped by to see what we do. I have received emails and phone calls asking about our club. In fact, I got an email the other day asking what program we use to make the Counterpoise because they liked the layout and would like to use it for their club. It's great to see an interest in the ARCEC and we welcome visitors to each of our meetings. Stop by on the second Thursday of the month and see what we are all about.

73

Paul KC6QLS

AI6O

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Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon

General Membership Meeting
10 January 2008



The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by club President Paul, KC6QLS.

The Minutes from the December meeting were approved by the general membership as printed in the Counterpoise.

Introduction of visitors was called, but there were no visitors in attendance.

Awards were handed out to those who missed the Christmas Party

TREASURER'S report was read by Stogie, KG6JCW. It was commented that we still have the money for Cal Fire; Paul said that the equipment would be purchased the following day, January 11th. The report was approved as read.

OFFICERS for 2008 were installed – Paul, KC6QLS read off the list of officers for 2008.

Updated Home Brew Contest Rules were read and discussed. It was pointed out that a category for kits had been added, as well as the ability to submit projects made in previous years as long as it had not been entered before, and it must be in working order.

Much of the meeting was spent discussing recommendations to the Board for the upcoming budget. One of the main changes was the idea of having most people get the Counterpoise either online by visiting the website or by e-mail, instead of by US mail. Currently mailing and printing costs for the Counterpoise runs about \$18 per person, which is equal to our current dues. Anyone still needing it mailed to them (no e-mail or computer) will still be accommodated. A poll was taken of the attendance and five people raised their hands that they needed the Counterpoise mailed to them. A list was created and will also be available at the next meeting.

Rich announced Al Rich W6WYN is moving into assisted living and needs to sell some radios and a couple of towers – information will be on the web site.

After the break Paul, KC6QLS discussed budget proposals that had been discussed at the Board meeting. He was looking for a recommendation from the attendees to take back to the February Board meeting. The proposals ranged from no change leading to a shortfall this year, which would be even worse if some of our outside income sources which have been dwindling fail to come through this year (swap-meet was mentioned as sending checks less frequently). The other proposals were keyed upon the aforementioned change of how the Counterpoise would be delivered, lowering printing and mailing costs dramatically and

leading to a budget surplus even with the most conservative of outside income estimates.

In additional discussions, members suggested to raise dues but have need based dues, much like is done in some church organizations. An additional proposal was to raise dues to \$20 with full mailing of the Counterpoise, which even with the conservative estimates of income would leave the club \$864 in the black.

At the end of the discussion a vote was called on the which proposals to put forward to the Board.

21 voted to recommend to the board the second budget proposal based around cutting the Counterpoise to 40 issues and e-mailing to most members.

0 voted for keep everything as now, hoping all extra funds come in, and keep printing and sending Counterpoise to most of the membership.

0 voted to raise dues, and keep all else the same.

A comment was made that the reminder for what month a person's dues are up for renewal was on the Counterpoise mailing label, which will no longer be possible if the Counterpoise is received online. A suggestion was made to go back to a single month for dues to be due for everyone, so reminding people will be much easier. It was pointed out that a system like SD Six-shooters where people that join in a different month pay pro-rated membership dues so their renewal date would be the same month as everyone else. Changing everyone's due date to December 31st of each year would be putting the ARCEC dues back to how they were originally set up when our club was first formed.

It was suggested to add \$175 per year for the budget to keep our bulk mailing stamp even though it would no longer be needed for the Counterpoise on a yearly basis, at least for the time being until we are sure we'll never need it. If we get rid of it and need it again, it would be significantly more expensive to obtain since it was obtained back in the 70's.

Paul announced that the Web site had gone down, but it's back up now. He's done some work on it and now there is an interactive calendar page with the schedule for the entire year, including links into info on nets, Home Brew, Swap Meets, Field Day, picnic, etc.

There was a call for volunteers for the Spotlight Section of the Counterpoise. There are also sign up sheets in the back of the meeting room for volunteering.

Steve, KO4QT discussed needs for Field Day. He needs to know who has radios and who is interested in going. A sign up sheet will be created for the next meeting or contact him directly.

AFFILIATED CLUBS There was no SANDARC report this month

MEMBERSHIP 267 as of December but approximately 60 have outstanding dues. There were 42 in attendance and 12 renewed their memberships.

Continued Page 15

From The Vice President KO4QT Steve



As reported by NOAA on January 5th, Solar Cycle 24 has begun. Dust off your rigs and come to the February Club meeting where John Graf, WA6L (our club "Elmer"), will be our featured speaker and he'll be talking about *Contesting*. John enjoys operating "QRP" (low power) and "CW" (Morse code), and has made contacts all over the world. Talk about a challenge!

Field Day will be here soon and I'd like to know as soon as possible who we can count on for setup Friday and tear down Sunday, as operators, and who will be bringing equipment, Rig's, Power Supplies, etc. I'd also like input from those interested in running a PSK station on HF.

Speaking of Field Day, we'd like to have T-shirt contest again this year. Start drawing now and have your entry ready for the May meeting. Drawings must include "WA6BGS" and "Field Day 2008" or "Field Day '08", and cannot have "ARRL" or the ARRL logo. Due to cost, designs are limited to only 3 solid colors. I'll bring one of last year's T-shirts to the meeting this month so you can see how the 3 colors were set up. The prize for the winning design will be a free T-Shirt.
See you at the meeting,

As Larry the Cable Guy says: "Git'R Done"

Steve KO4QT



WA6BGS Nets

Mike Oberbauer:	KG6TDP	Net Manger
Mike Oberbauer:	KG6TDP	Net Controller
Frito	N6WKB	Wide Open Nets
Ed Felter	AI6O	WAMO/D

WAMO NETS:

Wednesday and Saturday Nights
8:00 pm local time 7:30 "Checkins"

Tuesday Night Rag Chew net:

8:00 pm

Nets held on club repeaters

WA6BGS Repeaters

RX 147.420 (146.475) 107.2 PL

RX 224.080 – 107.2 PL

RX 445.900 – 107.2 PL

Don't miss it. All members welcome.

New WAMO/D Net

ARCEC, San Diego Digital VHF Net

Time: 8:00 p.m.

Day: Thurs. "Except 2nd Thurs. of the month"

Mode: PSK31

Frequency: 50.290 MHz. and a QSY to 144.144 MHz

This is an open net and all are invited. Early check-ins will be taken. Hope to see you on the waterfall!!

WAMO means Worked All Members Only. The purpose of WAMO is to encourage people to people communication between club members and to publicize the name of the club among fellow amateurs.

Calendar of Events February 2008

Feb. 2:	Swap Meet, Santee Drive In, 6:30 am
Feb. 2:	T-Hunt, Grossmont College lot, 6:00 pm
Feb. 5:	Board Meeting, 7:00 pm
Feb. 7:	SDDVHF PSK Net 8 PM 20.290 MHz
Feb. 14:	General Meeting, 7:00 pm
Feb. 16:	Swap Meet, Santee Drive In, 6:30 am
Feb. 16:	T-Hunt, Grossmont College lot, 6:00 pm
Feb. 16:	Yuma Ham Fest "Convoy"
Feb. 17:	Counterpoise Dead Line
Feb. 21:	SDDVHF PSK Net 8 PM 20.290 MHz
Feb. 28:	SDDVHF PSK Net 8 PM 20.290 MHz

Upcoming Event Dates

Field Day 2008, Del Mar Fair, Open House FS,
Mother Goose Parade

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GARY YATES
OWNER

(619) 561-3202

12461 WOODSIDE AVE.
LAKESIDE, CA 92040



Tom Mc Duffie KM6K, Manager
5375 Kearny Villa Road
San Diego, CA 92123
(858) 560-4900 or 1-800-854-6046

The Counterpoise is also online in FULL COLOR. Check it out and the club's website at: www.wa6bgs.org

Get your advanced copy by e-mail. I will send it out in .PDF format the night it goes to print. E-mail me and let me know that you would like a copy. Size of file maybe up to 1.5 mb at times.

Change of Address

Moving?

Do not miss an issue of the Counterposie. Fill out the Change of address form below.

Call _____ WAMO# _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

New Address:

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Send to Membership Chairperson:

A.R.C.E.C./ P.O. Box 50, El Cajon, CA 92022

ARCEC Membership Application

1. Amateur Call Sign	2. Class of License
3. First Name	4. Last Name
5. Street Address	6. City, State, Zip+4
7. Home Phone	8. Work Phone
May we list: Y N	
9. DOB	10. e-mail
11. ARRL Member Yes no	12. ARES Member Yes No
13. RACES Member Yes No	14. Sponsored by: or Family Member

Return this form with check made payable to the Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon or ARCEC for new or renewal membership. Annual Dues \$18.00 for Individual, \$30.00 for family. New members add \$5.00 per member. Include your call on Check. Mail to

Membership Chairperson
A.R.C.E.C., P.O. Box 50, El Cajon, CA 92022

New () or Renewal ()	WAMO Number
Certificate Issued	Dues from _____ To _____
Paid Cash () Check ()	Check No. Date Paid:

Computer Roster Available

Want the roster sent to you via e-mail? Send an e-mail to Ann Rios KC6TBG, and she will send you the database back as an attachment. She uses Excel, but may be able to convert to various formats if asked. Send your request to 619-593-9445 or KC6TBG@cox.net

FUN PAGE

Birthdays February

February 1	KI6FIH	Tassy	Rios
February 2	WB6NMR	Angelo	Boccia
February 4	K5WFW	Len	Fulbright
February 5	KD6HWJ	Shirley	Green
February 7	WD6FDD	Richard	Wilkerson
February 14	KG6HBX	Peter	Block
February 15	W5COM	Tom	Bryan
February 17	K6GTP	George	Roullard
February 18	KI6EEK	Lisie	Rios
February 19	W6CCM	Erich	Bennett
February 19	KB6CKM	Harold	Campbell
February 19	KE6SLO	Jerry	Rauch
February 21	KD6PRV	Anselmo	Ruiz



Plaza Las Palmas Center
1255 Avocado Ave. Suite 103,
El Cajon, CA 92020 (619) 440-4031

Brain Thinkers

2=S. of a L.'s T. 2 Shakes of a Lamb's Tail

3=W. on a T. 3 Wheels on a Tricycle

435=S. in the H. of R.

435 Seats in the House of Representatives

----- This Month's -----

1=G. L for M.

2=N. in a D.

4=S. in a D. of C.

Word Search "Contest"

L	C	K	O	H	Y	W	S	U	E	W	O	F	Z	O	A
P	O	W	E	R	S	U	P	P	L	Y	S	U	H	Z	N
O	A	G	U	W	A	S	R	W	B	E	A	M	X	W	T
P	X	S	G	P	H	D	H	Y	A	O	S	Y	Q	O	E
Y	S	O	F	I	Z	P	I	V	C	H	Z	N	W	K	N
A	W	H	P	C	N	Y	Z	O	O	Q	F	E	R	U	N
E	I	S	X	O	F	G	R	K	W	S	R	H	S	O	A
S	T	Q	U	M	W	N	S	C	R	I	B	E	F	H	W
U	C	P	V	O	K	P	W	O	H	J	X	W	O	X	O
J	H	C	W	K	E	Y	H	V	F	Q	Z	N	H	Y	R
O	K	Y	Z	Q	J	U	V	Y	T	H	U	J	V	E	
U	S	F	F	Y	Q	F	Z	K	E	N	W	O	D	N	
P	Y	F	Q	U	F	O	P	O	K	R	Y	A	Q	X	U
Z	S	E	N	O	Z	S	V	S	U	P	Z	N	R	S	T
F	R	E	Q	U	E	N	C	Y	C	H	A	R	T	E	P
W	H	J	S	K	P	Z	V	Z	J	P	V	O	L	S	
Q	C	Q	C	Q	C	E	R	I	W	M	O	D	N	A	R

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ANTENNA | <input type="checkbox"/> KENWOOD |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BEAM | <input type="checkbox"/> LOGGINGSOFTWARE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CABLE | <input type="checkbox"/> POWERSUPPLY |
| <input type="checkbox"/> COAXSWITCH | <input type="checkbox"/> RADIO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> COFFEE | <input type="checkbox"/> RANDOMWIRE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CQCQCQ | <input type="checkbox"/> SCRIBE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CW KEY | <input type="checkbox"/> TOWER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DX | <input type="checkbox"/> TUNER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FREQUENCYCHART | <input type="checkbox"/> YAESU |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ICOM | <input type="checkbox"/> ZONE |

Last Month's Word Search



HAM Spot Light

KF6SXZ

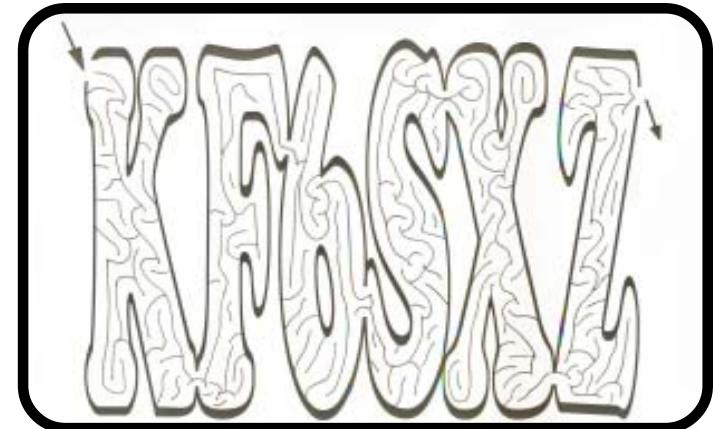


While making my calls this evening as a Nominations Committee Member, I had the opportunity to speak with Marco Thorne, WAMO 1494. He had a jolly voice and graciously declined to run for an office or the board due to the fact that he is 93 years old. We began to chat and he indicated that he had obtained his license at the age of 84. He reminisced that as a kid growing up in Los Angeles, he loved to read Popular Mechanics and Popular Science magazines at the public library. He had an interest in radios and learning about how to build them. However, as he worked as a newspaper boy, he did not have extra funds to purchase parts and batteries back then. He recalled finding some radio junk in a trash bin, picked up that junk and assembled a radio with a loud speaker for his mom using his knowledge from the magazines. Marco recalls he used to get some money from neighbors, who spent most of their funds getting battery-powered broadcast radios. He scrounged slats of wood, climbed roofs and put up one to four wire antennas. Some let him come in at night and find KOA Denver, KSL Salt Lake, KGO San Francisco or KFSD San Diego before there were national networks. In 1929, Majestic Radios came out which used 12 volt A/C instead of batteries. This made all types of radios less expensive and easier to build. During WWII, Ham Radio was prohibited. Hams used decals to put call signs on rear car windows. Other Hams driving by tapped "Hi" on their car horns and waved out of car windows. Yes, Ham Radio was still alive. After WWII came TV, FM Transistors, handheld Radios (\$80.00 each), cell phones, and computers, but Ham Radio still prospers. CW was always a challenge, but Marco finally mastered the code and obtained his call, KF6SXZ, in 1998 after 72 years effort. Marco indicated that both Frito and John Cordle KF6XY were a big help to him getting on the air, and he always liked talking with other hams on their nets. He has been a member of the ARCEC

since 1998 and has always enjoyed all the comradery and activities. Marco looks forward to receiving his monthly Counterpoise and continues to enjoy his subscriptions to QST and CQ. During the recent fires, he tuned his 2-meter handheld to the Palomar Repeater and listened to the amateur radio operators wishing he was still physically able to go out there and volunteer with them. He states he really enjoyed volunteering for Special Olympics and the County Fair. He says "Nobody has lived until he gets his amateur radio license. Well, you know that. There is just so much to do in amateur radio, and it is here to stay. So enjoy, enjoy." Marco's friendly positive attitude, enthusiasm and love for amateur radio was evident throughout our conversation, and it was truly a pleasure to meet and speak with him as I made my way down the Membership Roster searching for possible nominations for our upcoming election. No longer just a voice on the radio, the Spotlight shines on KF6SXZ.

Tassy Rios KI6FIH

MAZE



Jokes

God made relatives;

Thank God we can choose our friends

Lisie KI6EEK

**The Editor's
Corner
KC6QLS Paul**



Editor's Corner

I have crunched the numbers and it looks like the Counterpoise is going 98% digital circulation. This will save the club some operating cash and will help with the bottom line. The members that have to get the Counterpoise by mail will still receive it by that mode. If for some reason you did not get it by mail, I am sorry you did not make it on the list; please call me and you will be added. We will mail up to 25 copies by snail mail. The Counterpoise can be as small or as large because it's only 0 and 1's. I will do my best to keep the file size as small as I can to keep load time down to 60 sec or less for high speed downloads. If you wish to be the very first to receive the Counterpoise as soon as it is done "around 2 a.m. in the morning", please sign up for the Counterpoise by email. Please use the WA6BGScountepoie@cox.net email address and in the subject line place Counterpoise by email.

Paul, KC6QLS

Public Relations

This year at the San Diego/Del Mar Fair, we are going to have a booth at Kids Best. We will need help to work with the kids building the wooden CW Keys and someone that can help the kids with CW. At the Open House at Fire Station 6 we almost ran out of the CW Keys, so we will make about 1000 units for the fair. The people at the fair said that that would be a good number to start with. The Fair will place our booth in the Fair Program book and will announce it over the PA system. At one of our meetings we will assemble the CW keys for the fair.

73, Paul Rios, KC6QLS

Volunteers Needed

Up Coming Events

San Diego County Fair "ARCEC Booth"
Please Sign up at the next meeting

E-Mail

Address for the Counterpose. Please submit all *Counterpose* Mail to:
WA6BGScountepoie@cox.net

Prize Table Needs Help

Thank you for your contributions to the Prize Table! We still need your Support and Help or it may just end up a thing of the past. Please contact: Floyd Lang AF6BC at 303-6711.

Things to keep in mind

Get on the El Cajon ARC Reflector

To sign up visit:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/elcajonarc/>

You will get the latest news about The Club and things going on in the Ham world.

Quote of the Month

"He that would govern others, first should be the master of himself."

- The Bondman [1624], act 1, sc.iii

For Amateur Radio Public Relations San Diego
Please visit
www.aprsd.org



Crest Radio Museum

Pat Bunsold, WA6MHZ



Todays adventure in Rare radios starts with the Heathkit Monobander HW32. Pic 1 looks nothing like a normal HW-32, or any Heathkit in fact. It is blue and has a lot more knobs than any other Heathkit. Single band radio. That is because it has the Dynalabs Mod kit in it, including the new Front panel and dial. This turns the HW-12/22/32 rigs into a triband radio covering 75/40/20 meters. Does it work? Not yet, but I am working on it. Dynalabs advertised in CQ, 73 and maybe QST in the mid 60s for this kit, which was pretty cheap and many worked or they wouldn't have stayed in business. OH, they did go out of business shortly; at least out of the Ham rig mod arena, so it is unknown if this mod ever worked. But it should work, in theory, however the deeper I delve into it, the more "no way it could ever have worked" things I find. Like, the 40 and 20M bands are split in 2 and there is no provision for doing such. Need 2 more heterodyne xtals to do that, not in the mod. Maybe they were going to get around to it someday. But it is sure pretty! Note the ugly scratch under the 3 knobs in the upper left corner. I tried and tried to match model paint to color in this, but after 5 tries I gave up. It is tough to get an exact color match by mixing colors. But it looks better than it did. Long ways to go on this one. OH, so many radios, so little time!

The 2nd radio of the month is the WRL Duo Bander II, a 75 and 40 meter LSB rig made in 1969 by World Radio Labs of Leo Meyerson fame. The predecessor was the Duobander 84, which they sold lots of. But, as the 60s came to a close, they decided to update the rig with new Sweep tube finals and more mods. And so came the Duobander II model. However, they only made 100 of these, so it is indeed one of the rarest radios in the world, and once again, it was so rare there were few bidders and I nailed it dirt cheap. But when it came in, I found out why the seller had sold it. He mentioned in the ad that it did not work and maybe another Ham could fix it. It was readily apparent why it didn't work. Someone quite STUPID, and I really mean STUPID, decided there was no need for an external Power supply

to this radio (need +700, +400, -100 and 12V), so he just took the 12 pin connector and soldered on an AC Power cord (not fused of course). Then he must of chosen 2 pins at random (any of the 12 pins will work, right?) and plugged it in. I sure wish I could have been there when he turned on the Power switch, for he had wired the AC LINE right across the power Switch!!!! There must have been a tremendous explosion and the house circuit breaker caught fire as all 117 Volts went at infinite amps through the Power switch, which welded itself into a dead short!!!! I replaced the Pot and Power switch, but need to find the correct power supply to see if it still works. DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME!!! (Unless you are REALLY STUPID!) It sure still looks pretty!

Today's final tip was used on the Duobander II as the meter had a terrible scratch down the center of it, very deep and deadly!!! Now, what do you do about a meter that has been scratched that bad and no replacement has been made since 1969? You repair the scratch! Pic 3 shows how it is done. This is risky at best, but has worked every time for me. First you need to get rid of the scratch, and this is done by sanding it out. Very carefully sand in one direction only the scratch away with very very fine sandpaper. I use 3M 400 Wet/dry paper. Takes lots and lots of sanding to get down through the scratch. But then you will see the clear lens all fuzzy and opaque. Not a problem, for the next step is to use the magic liquid NOVUS #2 to buff out the haze. Takes loads and loads of Elbow grease, many many rubs to make it clear again. But, after many tries, it will look beautiful with no evidence of the terrible scratch that messed up the meter! The Duobander looks great now! Just be very careful not to scratch it too badly with the sandpaper! I have had success every time!

Pat Bunsold WA6MHZ

Curator

Crest Radio Museum

Please See Photos on page 11

DOWN BELOW IN EL CAJON LIFE BELOW 50 MHz

The Zero Point

It looks to be official now. With the sighting of the first sunspot in cycle 24, we are now at the very bottom of the solar cycle. As far as HF propagation goes, this is the nadir — zero, zip, nada, the pits . . .

Naturally, an event like this gets a man to thinking about being a Ham Radio operator. If you believe the common wisdom, this is a bad time for our hobby. You hear words like "the bands are dead," "you just got your license? Wait a few years . . ." and of course, "I'm selling my HF rigs and buying a video game console" (I made that last one up). But when you come right down to it, making contacts through the air using low power radio waves is hard. Some people may say it is just plain crazy. Sure, it might be a little tougher now than it was a few years ago, but it has always been something that takes time, effort, and lots and lots of patience. Its not just about having a radio and a license, it is about knowing what to do with them.

And that is the whole point of our hobby. Really, if you want it easy, just pick up your cell phone and call someone across the country. Or get on the Internet and send an email to somebody on the other side of the globe. I guarantee it will work, but what is the fun it doing it the easy way? So, if knowledge is a key to making contacts, what is there to learn at the bottom of the sunspot cycle? For me, Amateur Radio is a dynamic hobby and I am constantly amazed at how much I don't know. So in that spirit I want to share with you the three new things I learned about HF in 2007:

1. GET ON 160 METERS

I am embarrassed to admit that I was a Ham for 27 years before I made my first 160 meter contact. I always thought that it was too hard. Antennas took up an acre of space, and you needed at least a kilowatt to get above the noise level. None of that is true. Antennae for 160M are no more difficult than for any other band. I was inspired by Tom, W5COM, who can make a working 160M antenna from a broomstick, a coat hanger, and a roll of masking tape. I don't have Tom's talent, so I bought my antenna. But it was

nowhere near as hard to get on the air as I thought it would be.

The great news is that the bottom of the solar cycle is the peak of 160 meter activity! It is truly a fun and interesting band, and I am making some great QSOs across the country and DX with 100 watts. I wish I had done this sooner.

2. CALL CQ

This sounds basic, but you have to stop and think about it. How many times have you scanned across a band, heard nothing, and either changed bands or shut off the rig? I used to do that all the time.

Imagine dozens, or perhaps hundreds of Hams all doing the same thing. The band may well be open, but you don't hear anything because everyone is listening and nobody is talking.

Here is the "trick." Get yourself a CW keyer that will loop a CQ call. Or if you are SSB operator, get yourself a Digital Voice Recorder or software that will emulate one. Now, instead of just the quick scan of the band, let your machine call CQ. Give it a few minutes while you check email, clean up your desk (my XYL's favorite), or check out the latest issue of QST. It doesn't work every time, but I have been absolutely amazed at how many Q's I've made on a supposedly "dead" band.

3. IGNORE YOUR PROPAGATION SOFTWARE

We have come a long way in predicting propagation. The charts that used to be published monthly in QST have been replaced by software that will tell you the MUF and SNR to any point on the planet.

The only problem is that these predictions don't mean that much. Because they are on a computer, we tend to believe that they are somehow the absolute truth. The reality is that they are based purely on probabilities. Some propagation is more probable than others, but none of it is right all the time.

I have stopped looking at the propagation software altogether (OK — maybe I will check it occasionally). I figure that it is better to see what is really happening rather than what might happen. And there are a couple of great tools that will help you do just that.

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The first is Propnet (www.propnet.org). Bookmark this link and refer to it often. It will tell you of band openings just as they take place; on 10 meters, 17 meters, and 30 meters. You can even watch as openings shift along with the grey line.

The second is the DX spotting clusters. These can be great tools for the DX'er, but they will also tell you about real-time band openings. When you suddenly start seeing a bunch of spots on 17 meters, you can pretty well guess that the band is open. Even if you don't have interest in chasing the DX station, you will probably have good luck scaring up a few contacts on the open band.

As I look at my logbook, 2007 was a great year for me. I had some wonderful QSO's and plenty of activity. My January 2008 total is at 473 contacts, and the month is not over yet. I don't think I will be buying any video game consoles just yet . . .

73,
John, WA6L

CREST RADIO MUSEUM Photos



Amateur Radio At Large

From Rich N6NKJ



Hello to all,

As I type this, the first month of the new year is almost over. To me, it seems as though Christmas was just a few days ago, but here we are almost starting the second month of 2008.

A BIG THANK YOU to Paul Schmidt and his Surf Group "San Diego Ultra Running Friends" for their generous donation of \$2500.00 dollars to buy the much needed equipment for CAL FIRES VIP Red Flag Program.

Our President Paul Rios, KC6QLS, our Vice President Steve Weed, KO4QT, and I, Rich Beisigl, N6NKJ, went to HRO, and bought ALL of the equipment that is needed for the CAL FIRE VIP program. Then we went to IKEA and bought a metal cabinet to store and lock the equipment in when not in use. The item we are waiting to come in, is the ten meter antenna, and then it will be time to install the radios and antennas.

We will need several people to help us with the installation work, so if you are available, please let me, Paul or Steve know you want to help us with this project.

As I mentioned at our last club meeting, I will be meeting with Roxanne Provaznik, to set a day and time for the class on wild land fire safety. For those of you who wish to take this course, there will be a sign up sheet at our clubs meeting in February.

Speaking of our club, it was great to see so many of you take part in the various events offered by our club. Your input and ideas are always welcome.

We are looking for more members to participate in our East County Response Team. This is a group of volunteers who are ready, able and willing to serve other groups who have a need for amateur radio communications. As I am notified of other organizations needs for amateur radio operators, I will let our response team members know so they can help out as needed.

If there are officers of other amateur radio clubs, or amateur radio organizations reading the Counterpoise, and would like to have any of their

clubs activities listed in this column, please send them to me at rbeisigl@csst.net , and I will do my best to include them.

Well, that is it for this month, but as always, please remember the men and women of our United States Armed Forces; REMEMBER FREEDOM ISN'T FREE! If you do not believe this just go to Ft. Rosecrans and see the rows and rows of white crosses of our fallen heroes.

Until next time, HAVE FUN WITH AMATEUR RADIO.

Rich, N6NKJ

Membership Report

New Member:
Charles Barstow, KB6EPQ, WAMO # 1749

The club roster will be available for pick up at the next meeting for those who signed up for a copy at the last meeting. For those who signed up for an email copy of the roster, that will be emailed out the Saturday after the meeting.

Ann, KC6TBG



Meeting Photos Photos



Paul K6PKS with his Award

Tom W5COM and his Home Brew Award



Ken KI6HRH and his Home Brew Award

Rich N6NKJ with his Award

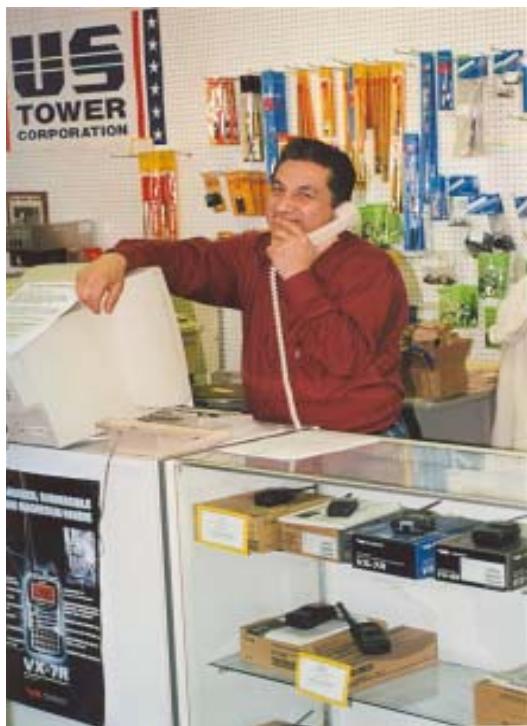
CAL Fire Radio Gear At HRO



Rich, Paul and Tom going over the list, do we have everything?



Photo of the Gear.



Jose on the phone with customer.



OK! We have the radio gear!
Let's install it!

January meeting Minutes Continued

EDUCATION report: Tech classes will be starting January 15th at 7:00 p.m. The location is 222 W. Madison Avenue in El Cajon. The textbook will be the ARRL Tech Class License Manual, and the class is expected to last 4-6 weeks. On the 18th of March will be the start of the General Theory Course with Gordon Shackelford as the instructor. The Extra theory course is likely to be held sometime in September.

AUDIT Report: N6OPH will be auditing the books again this year and will present a report to membership.

Public Service Report: N6NKJ reported that Cal Fire equipment will be purchased the following day, January 11th. There will be a need for a work party to help set it up, and there will be a sign up sheet at the February meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Dan Severance, N6ERD
Secretary
Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon

LARGE SALE OF AMATEUR

EQUIPMENT AND PARTS
PUT ON BY A NUMBER OF
SAN DIEGO HAMS

Saturday February 16, 2008
TIME: 8AM TO 2PM
LOCATION: 6705 SAN MIGUEL AVE.
LEMON GROVE
You name it, it will probably be
there!

George
WB6YEC

Odds & Ends

The 2010 ARRL South Western Division Convention Committee has started to form. Mike N6OPH is the Chair, Ann KC6TBG and I KC6QLS will be the CO Vice Chairs like the 2006 Convention. If you would like to help with the 2010 Convention, please contact Mike N6OPH or myself KC6QLS.

The 2008 Del Mar Fair "San Diego Fair" is coming up soon. This year we will be in the infield at the Kid's Best tent. We need persons that know CW to help the kids send their name in CW. This is a great way to get the kids interested in Ham Radio.

Field Day is also coming soon. Steve KO4QT is looking for persons to help set up radios, towers and do all kinds of things. Please contact Steve if you would like to help.

The Fire Station 6 open House keeps getting better each year. The last one was attend by more then 5000 people. Monica wrote a report about it. If you like to read it please visit http://elcajonfire.com/archives/2007/10/2005_fire_open.php Next year will be even better.

Lastly, CERT classes are now scheduled for 2008. Visit <http://www.elcajonfire.com/> This is a great opportunity!

73
Paul KC6QLS

AD Space Available
Please contact
KC6QLS@cox.net
Size for Ads
2"X1.5" 3"X2"
4"X5" Full Page
E-mail for prices

Amateur Radio Club of El Cajon
P.O. Box 50
El Cajon, CA 92022



Issue Date 2/2008

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Is your membership ready to expire?

Take a look on your mailing label. Is the expiration date in 2007? Does it say EXPIRED? That means it's time to mail in your yearly dues. Please take time to fill out the membership application in this newsletter, and mail it in, or bring it to the next meeting.

**Next Class
Technician Class
is underway, next
class 2/12/2008**

**General Class
March 18, 2008**

**Please Contact:
Mike Maston
N6OPH
(619) 296-9067**

**Please Visit Our Website at
www.WA6BGS.org**

VEC Testing Sites

1 st Saturday:	El Cajon 10:00 am First Lutheran Church of EC 867 South Lincoln Ave.
2 nd Saturday:	Carlsbad 9:30 am Carlsbad Safety Center Orion Way Carlsbad
3 rd Saturday:	North Park 10:00 am North Park Recreation Center 4044 Idaho Street San Diego
4 th Saturday:	Chula Vista 8:30 am Fire Station #7 1640 Santa Venetia Chula Vista
5 th or last Saturday:	Escondido 9:00 am LDS Church 1917 East Washington St.

To make advance reservations or to find out more info from the site captain, please call 465-EXAM (3926)

